

Raphael Mengs, and amongst them a sketch for a Deposition (in chalk), left unfinished at the time of his death. This sketch, which is large and clever, was bought by the Marquis Rinuccini for 1000 scudi. There is a good portrait of his cotemporary, Lord Cowper, who was ambassador here for many years; it is dated at the back 1769. This lord, it is said, stayed in Florence thirty years, "sempre colla intenzione di restituire a Londra al venir d'ogni nuovo mese." The sale of the pictures is fixed for the 5th March, by public auction; but I should think very few would be sold, for here in Florence their notions of the value of old pictures is not only enormous, but ridiculous.

MUSEUM OF PRACTICAL ART.

ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOLS FOR DRAWING AND MODELLING.

THE Department of Practical Art have issued an announcement that they are prepared, under certain conditions, to aid local efforts for the establishment of elementary schools for drawing and modelling, in connection with existing schools or otherwise, and to prepare students for entering the schools of ornamental art hitherto known as Schools of Design. Amongst the conditions it is requisite that a local committee, or a responsible person, engage to provide a suitable room with a list of twenty male or female scholars willing to attend for at least three months at not less than 6d. a week. The Board will, for its part, appoint a competent master, and guarantee a certain income, fees inclusive, for a stated period, and will lend drawing copies, models, books, &c. and otherwise assist. Forms of application may be obtained from the secretary of the department of practical art, at Marlborough House, Pall-mall.

We have received a letter from a pupil of the Belfast School of Art, a working man, who complains of the system followed in such schools:—

"In Nos. 479 and 480 of your Journal," he says, "which I received in my monthly part for April, there are articles headed 'Observations on Teaching Drawing,' which so fully agree with my preconceived notions of the matter, that I beg you to express my thanks to the writer. I am a working man, with a little knowledge of mechanical drawing, and very eagerly desirous to improve myself in the art of putting my ideas neatly and somewhat artistically on paper.

I am beyond thirty years of age, without the vanity of becoming an artist, but certainly with as much of hope as induces me to believe that it is possible for me to make such a geometrical development of my ideas as that, satisfying my judgment. It would, at the same time, be inoffensive to the eye.

With this feeling, then, I became a pupil of the Government School of Design, hoping that I should be allowed to fix myself to the studies which would be at once gratifying to my taste and necessary to the object I had in view.

I need not say to you that I was altogether and absolutely disappointed. I found the system as completely unfitted to my wants—nay, as perfectly repugnant to my will, as it was possible to conceive. Do but take this picture. Here am I, engaged in getting up buildings, and accustomed to make ornament subservient to solidity. There is a designer in me, and I am accustomed to make ornament the end. Can it be conceived that the same course of study will equally well conduce to the improvement and proper education of both? The consequence was that I, as well as many others, left the school.

Now, sir, through such a periodical as yours, is it not possible to induce the Government to feel the necessity of remodelling the schools of design, and making them really serviceable to the classes for whom they were ostensibly originated? They would be a great blessing if the line of study were adapted to the wants and wishes of the pupils, and in my opinion, they would then be more successful.

Under the direction of the Department of Practical Art, an Exhibition has been opened at Marlborough-house, Pall-mall, consisting of the articles selected from the Great Exhibition, and purchased by the Government; and a large number of the works of the students at the various Schools of ornamental art throughout the country. The sum expended in purchases is £3,171, and the objects include

metal works, woven fabrics, enamels, ceramic manufactures, wood carving, and furniture. There may be differences of opinion, and doubtless will be, as to the value of some of the things purchased, but none will deny that a very important nucleus for a Museum has been formed, and that great advantage will result from the study of some of the specimens thus collected. They must be viewed properly, however. We quite agree with the editor of the catalogue:—"The principles belong to us, not so the results; it is taking the end for the means; if this collection should lead only to the reproduction of an Indian style in this country, it would be a most flagrant evil."

The shields, by Vaché, are very remarkable for fine style and good work. Barbetti's carved cabinet (equally remarkable for its beauties and defects); Virabent's terra cotta chimney-piece; and Crace's Gothic bookcase, are prominent objects in the collection. In the latter, the stiff late-perpendicular character of the top contrasts poorly with the flowing German character of the brasswork which fills the panels. It is, nevertheless, an excellent piece of furniture. The coloured pottery friezes, by Minton, should open new views to architects. The Indian tissues are remarkable for combinations of colour and judicious forms. The shawl, by Duché Aîné, is an extraordinary specimen of weaving, and will tempt many an Eve.

The drawings by the scholars give evidence of progress in the Metropolitan school and at Manchester, Dublin, Belfast, Coventry, and elsewhere. From the metropolitan school there is some good modelling, and in the female department Miss Gann, Miss Florence Cullina, Miss Eliza Mills, and others fully justify the good opinions we have before expressed concerning them. From the potteries there is some clever modelling by Hauley, Toft, &c.

We are glad to learn that the desire to obtain coloured lithographs of some of the examples in the museum has led to the formation of a class of female students, for practising the art of chromolithography. The present catalogue contains much useful matter on the subject of ornamentation.

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

Stratford.—Christ Church, erected for the district of Stratford Marsh, will shortly be opened for divine worship. The building committee were unable, from want of funds, to complete the plan at first proposed. The spire remains to be finished at some future period.

Mucking.—The church of St. John the Baptist has now been rebuilt on the old foundation and re-opened. The old chancel remains, the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, to whom it belongs, preferring to repair rather than to rebuild it. The sittings are nearly all open, with moveable seats in the chancel. The windows are mostly decorated lightly with stained glass borders, the eastern window of chancel, however, being filled with coloured glass. The roof is thrown open to the rafters, which are stained. Mr. Banson was the architect, and Mr. Chapman the builder.

Eton.—The college has recently had thirty-one portraits added to the collection already on its walls. They were bequeathed to it by Dr. Keate, late head master.

Chester.—The Town Council of Chester, at their last meeting, have instructed the borough engineer to prepare plans, &c. for the complete restoration of the Exchange. This building, although erected so recently as the year 1699, had become in a very dilapidated state; so much so, that two architects (Messrs. Reed and Harrison) were employed to report upon it, and they entertained serious doubts as to whether it should not be taken down and rebuilt; but, on further investigation, it has been determined to repair and restore it. Plans were also laid before the Council for the purification of the sewage water, so as to prevent it defiling the water of the river Dee; but these were directed to be suspended for the present, until the results of some experiments,

now about being made, were ascertained. Other plans had also been submitted previously for the complete removal of the sewage refuse of the town; but, in consequence of the doubts that now generally prevail as to the best and most economical method to be adopted, these also were placed in abeyance. It may be stated that the drainage of Chester, which is in a very advanced state, consists of a system of brick and pipe sewers combined. No pipe sewer is smaller than twelve inches diameter, and the house drains are generally six inches diameter. A committee at the same time was appointed to inquire into the system of the water supply of the town, with the view of placing the works on a proper footing.

Birmingham.—The first stone of the new church of St. Paul, at Balsall Heath, was to be laid on Monday, by Mrs. Taylor, of Moseley Hall. There is still a deficiency of 1,000ft. in the building fund.

Wednesbury.—A subscription has been commenced for the painting, cleansing, and repairing of the district Church of St. John. Messrs. James Bagnall and Thomas Walker, have given £500, as the cost of a new organ, the order for which has been transmitted to Mr. Walker, of London, organ builder. The instrument will contain eighteen stops, and the pedal pipes will be sixteen feet high. The necessary repairs will be commenced forthwith.

Preston.—A small covered market is about to be erected by Mr. R. Threlfall, on a site about 15 yards by 12, in front of the Arkwright Arms, Stonygate. It will have a slated roof supported by iron pillars, and be enclosed when not in use by iron gratings. On Wednesday last, says the *Preston Guardian*, a number of workmen were engaged in excavating a new lodge, for Messrs. Horrocks and Co's mills on Spital's Moss, an accident occurred which has had the effect of suspending work in twelve or thirteen large establishments, cotton mills, &c., and of impeding for a time the traffic on the canal. It appears that the wall of the old lodge, which immediately adjoins the one in course of formation, gave way, in consequence of the earth being removed from it: the water rushed with tremendous force into the half-formed reservoir, and bursting through the embankment on the canal side, rolled down the hill into the canal, carrying with it a large quantity of earth so as completely to prevent the traffic thereon.

Wigan.—A memorial cross has recently been erected in front of St. John's (R.C.) Chapel in this town. A quadrangular shaft, rising from a flight of steps, is supported at the base by the emblems of the four Evangelists, and bears under a crocketed canopy the figure of the crucified Saviour, attended by his mother and disciple. The shields at the base are fitted with the armorial bearings of the family who have erected the cross, the object of which is indicated by the inscription, which runs thus:—"For the love of Jesus, our Blessed Lord, and St. John, pray for the Souls of Charles and Elizabeth Walmsley, and for the good Estate of their children, who in memory of their dear Parents erected this Cross, 1852." The design was furnished by Mr. Pugin, and the carving of the stone has been executed by Mr. Myers, of London.

Greenock.—The chief stone of the new east parish church of this town was laid on Wednesday-week by the provost.

Guernsey.—Some restorations are now being made in the church of St. Peter's Port, chiefly at the instance of "a respectable family," as "a memorial to the dead." Heavy Grecian window-frames have been replaced by stone tracery in harmony with the rest of the structure, and a stained glass window by O'Connor. "The same family," says a local paper, "with the concurrence of our respected Bishop, has just completed the erection of a *recedes* in conformity with the style of the church, called by the French *Le Flamboyant*." The importations of granite in a broken state from Guernsey at the present time are of an extensive character. The arrivals on one day alone at the port of London lately included thirty-two vessels entirely laden with this article, and comprising upwards of 6,000 tons weight.